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# Communications Ministry Under Fire Over \$89mn Contract

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There is growing pressure on the Communications Ministry to abrogate the \$89 million contract with ICT company KelniGVG.

Some members of parliament and pro-government group Alliance for Accountable Governance (AFAG) are questioning whether the agreement is in the interest of the state.

Policy think-tank IMANI Ghana has faulted the contract between government and KelniGVG claiming the company engaged is not credible.

Some members of National Communications Board are alleged to have also kicked against the deal, a claim the Board has since denied.

Even though the Board conceded to the report of resignation by one of its members, it was quick to state that the resignation had nothing to do deal with KelniGVG.

Apart from IMANI, some MPs including the Ningo-Prampram legislator suspects something fishy is going.

According to Sam George, the Communications Minister, Ursula Owusu Ekuful went ahead with the contract on the blind side of Parliament's communication committee.



Ningo-Prampram MP, Sam George

"There are several fundamental issues which are very wrong in the exercise of this contract in question...the taxpayer has no business paying any private company any money for anything called monitoring because that is a calculated sham to defraud the taxpayer.

“None of the companies be it Subah or GVG has the capacity to tell, irrespective of any probe they claim they have put into the telcos system, that they can give us exact real data separate from what the telcos themselves generate,” he said.

The former presidential staffer in the Mahama administration who said he was speaking in his personal capacity and someone who has worked in the telecommunication industry criticized the controversial Subah deal signed.

Mr George said the deal signed during the Mahama government was useless claiming all the time that Subah was contracted, it relied on the data of the telcos.

He said the Akufo-Addo government signing a new contract is only a replication of an old contract which amounts to nothing.

“When the ICH license was going to be given, a decision was taken that whoever wins it will have to do the monitoring for free as part of their services...this is to ensure the taxpayer is not burdened because there is an analysis of existing data,” he explained.

According to him, both the new and old contracts must be terminated so the country reverts to Interconnect Clearing House (ICH) to save the drain on the state purse.

Reiterating it calls to abrogate the contract, AFAG also issued a release asking the Communications Minister and the Attorney General to come clean on the deal.





According to them, they are reliably informed that the AG's office, as well as the Finance Ministry, were not adequately consulted before signing the deal.

"We only want answers but we are not saying that something fraudulent is going on. We are only seeking clarity about the whole contract which will inform our next line of action," Arnold Boateng, a member of the group said.

"We are told consultation at the Finance Ministry was limited and if that is the case it is a very serious issue but it is up to Communication Ministry to respond appropriately. We have given them a lifeline and we hope they take to clarify the issue," he added.

Meanwhile, the Communications and Finance Committees of Parliament have taken a keen interest in the issue.

Sam George who is a member of the two committees said they were not aware of the issue until it gained currency in the media.

They have summoned the Communications Minister and officials of the NCA to have a first-hand understanding of the agreement so they proceed to take a decision.

Story by Ghana | Myjoyonline.com | Abubakar Ibrahim | abubakar.ibrahim@myjoyonline.com

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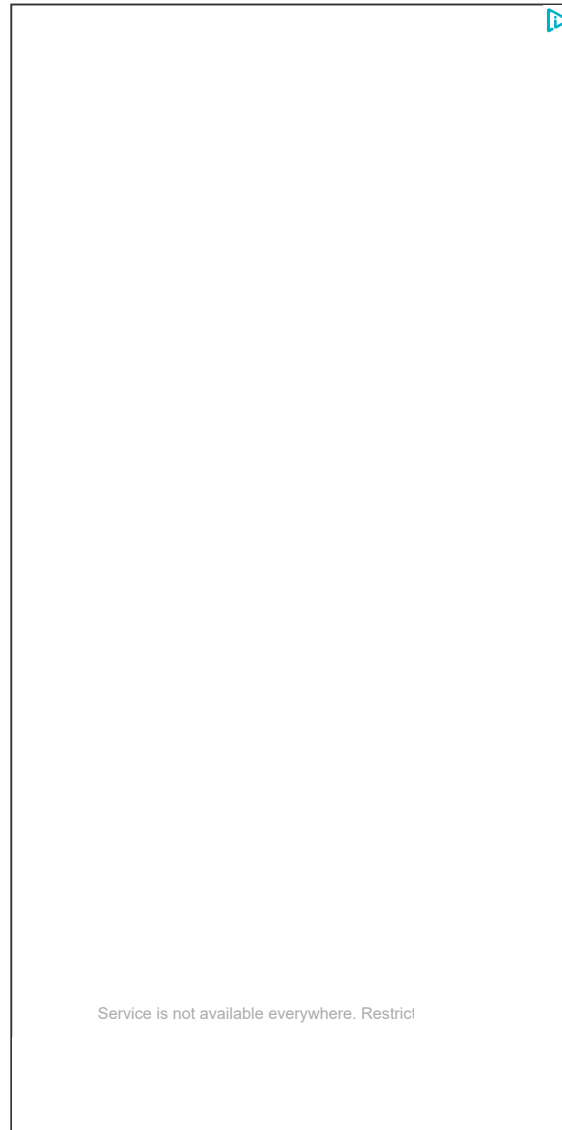




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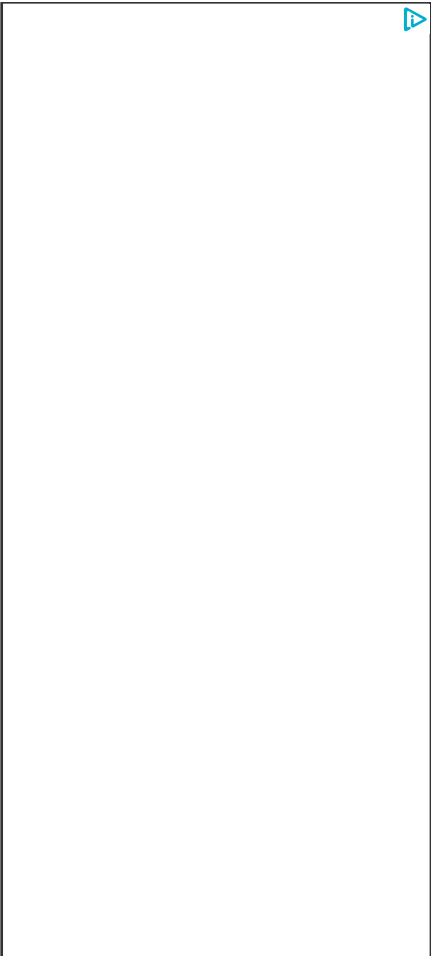


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